

# Youth Visions

## Hebrew High Students Examine Meaning of Freedom

At Hebrew High we encourage our teens to explore their Judaism and express themselves through many media. Just before Passover we had an inspiring T'fillah (service) led by members of LIBERTY, Temple Beth El's youth group. The rousing prayer service was artfully led by Ben Schine and Rachel Rappaport. With the theme of freedom as a guide, personal statements were read by several students. Below are excerpts from those statements:



Rachel Rappaport

dom for Jewish people in the past? If it was not for our ancestors we would not have the amount of freedom we have today. Without them we would not know what our real place in the world would be. They fought in numerous ways, all of which took perseverance and courage.

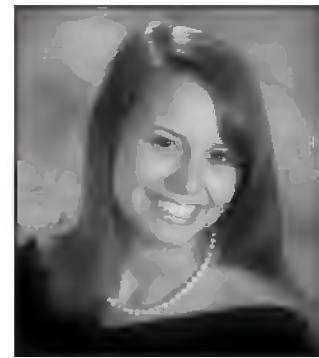
When I was in elementary school a girl who was in my class came up to me and said, "Oh, you're Jewish ... when you die you're not going to heaven you're going to hell." During the holocaust if a comment like that was said you would not be able to stand up for yourself, and if you did it would result in death. To this day Jews are still fighting for religious freedom and all other types of freedom. In the United States we are lucky enough to have many rights that can't be taken away because of our religion or race or what we believe in. As one of our most popular American song states, "Let Freedom Ring."

### Freedom by Caleb Seidler

It's about a week until Passover and spring fever is sweeping the nation. It is amazing that we could get this many Jewish teens together to create such an awesome sanctuary. Three thousand years ago we would be in Egypt building some pyramids. Think about how lucky we are to be listening to this amazing music. Think about the freedom and liberty we have when just 70 years ago we were being killed just for being Jewish. This country has provided us with homes and jobs some countries wouldn't. As we continue, think about the kids and teens our age who are still oppressed in central Africa, think about the rights we have that others don't.

### Freedom by Lexie Player

What does freedom mean? Freedom does not just have one definition. To some, freedom could mean staying out late or missing school. In our country there are three guaranteed rights - life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. We are also guaranteed the right to freedom of speech, press and especially religion. Religion is



Lexie Player

a huge debate throughout the world and not all of the other countries in the world offer the freedom of religion that is offered here in America. What does this freedom mean to our religion? It means that we have the freedom and the right to practice our religion free of persecution.

### Freedom by Debbie Rabinovich

Freedom has been fought over more than anything in the world. Sometimes we take it for granted, but in all seriousness, we shouldn't. As Jews, we have always been outsiders looking in; looking in as we were exiled from Spain, from

England, and even from our own homeland. We made our way to the Promised Land, our first taste of Zion, and of freedom. This country has made us, the Jewish people, insiders. I leave you with this: when you hear others make Jewish jokes or slurs, remind yourself that we are insiders just as much as anyone else. This country has given us freedom, and that is what freedom means. It means the right to stand up for what we believe in; the right to Zionism and the right to be Jews.

The 5771 Hebrew High, school year is about to come to a close. Don't let your teens miss out on the opportunity to express their Judaism in an open, nurturing environment. At Hebrew High we study, learn and create together in a community of caring Jewish teens and adults. For more information about our program, or to register your 8th-12th grade student for the 5772 school year, call Roz at 704-944-6782, or email rcooper@shalomcharlotte.org.

Hebrew High is a joint venture of Temple Israel and Temple Beth El and, is supported by The Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte. ♣



Abbe Cohen

### Freedom by Abbe Cohen

How would you describe free-

## The Jewish Traveler

By Maxine Silverstein

### SAN DIEGO

San Diego is one of my very favorite cities in the United States. Not only is the weather almost perfect the entire year, my twin sister Harriet lives in this beautiful city.

There is so much to do and see here. Wonderful restaurants, beautiful beaches, great museums, incredible zoo, Sea World, terrific shopping and a laid-back lifestyle. Wow, what a place!

There are six Jewish areas in San Diego County where you can find clusters of synagogues and Jewish agencies. Three of them are located to the south and three to the north. The three southern communities - including Chula Vista, central San Diego, and east San Diego - are older areas of Jewish settlement with lots of history. The three northern communities - La Jolla, North County Coastal and North Country Inland - are the newer, generally more expensive areas with lots of people living there. San Diego County's Jewish community has approximately 89,000 Jews. In size, the community is quite similar to that of Phoenix. The community is facing many issues: what to do about a soaring intermarriage rate, how to balance support for Israel and Jews overseas with support for local institutions, and where to locate other institutions for future growth. The Jewish community of San Diego dates back to the 1850s when Jewish merchants arrived in the city. At that time Jews constituted about 10% of the city's population. A major street in San Diego

was called Avenida des Judios (Avenue of the Jews).

We were able to visit Temple Beth Israel in Heritage Park located in the area known as "Old Town." In addition to offering an awe-inspiring view of the bay, the park is home to seven well-preserved Victorian buildings, one of which is the original Temple Beth Israel. Constructed in 1889, it is the second oldest synagogue in California. Its charming exterior is admired by many as a prime example of 19th century gothic revival architecture. The interior is stunning in its simplicity and remains unchanged from the day the first services were held to celebrate the Jewish New Year on September 25, 1889.

More spectacular ocean views can be found just north of the city in La Jolla. Spanish for "the Jewel," this town is filled with wonderful cafes and interesting boutiques. It is also home to the Potiker Cultural Arts Complex. In

addition to hosting cultural activities, the complex contains an art gallery that features rotating Jewish-themed exhibits.

The restaurants in San Diego are fabulous and run the gamut from great Pacific seafood and authentic Mexican to incredible Oriental cuisine. Many restaurants have beautiful ocean views. This past visit we got to eat at D.Z. Akins - one of my very favorite delis.

This place is huge with a menu that is both excellent and overwhelming. I can personally vouch for the matzah ball soup and chopped liver. This deli even has its own gift shop.

Other favorite places are Georges at the Cove - fabulous for outside oceanfront dining in La Jolla, and Tapenade - an incredible Provencal-style French restaurant also in La Jolla.

Any reference to a San Diego vacation must include one of the best city zoos ever. The San Diego Zoo is a must-see for animal lovers. It's very easy to walk through the entire zoo and the animals are spectacular. We loved the panda area and stayed watching these amazing creatures for as long as we could. When my children were small, they had the



Maxine at Temple Beth Israel in Old Town.

opportunity to go to Zoo Camp at this fabulous place. Other great places to visit are Sea World, North Beach and Del Mar for the horse races.

If you've gotten the impression that San Diego has many facets, then I haven't led you astray. If you get a chance, go visit and see which is your personal favorite. ♣



A panda at the San Diego Zoo.

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